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Weekend, November 4-6, 2016 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

‘THE CROWN’ SHINES ON NETFLIX

Claire Foy reigns as Queen Elizabeth. **20-21**

SEPTA strike has voters worried. 8

Sizing up the Eagles, Giants Week 9 matchup. 25

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IT’S FUN TO BE BAD

Mads Mikkelsen makes a case — sort of — for his ‘Doctor Strange’ villain. 16

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Take our daily news quiz to test your knowledge by going to **www.metro.us/news-quiz** to submit your answers.

1. What pop singer was scheduled to perform at a Clinton campaign event at the Mann Center?

2. How healthy does Odell Beckham Jr. claim to be heading into Sunday's game against the Eagles?

3. Which Bond film featured "Doctor Strange" baddie Mads Mikkelsen as the villain?

3 things you need to know

UK COURT SAYS BREXIT NEEDS PARLIAMENT'S APPROVAL

A British court ruled that the government needs parliamentary approval to start the process of leaving the EU, potentially delaying Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit plans. The government said it would appeal against the ruling and Britain's Supreme Court is expected to consider the case early next month. A spokeswoman for May said the prime minister still planned to launch talks on the terms of Brexit by the end of March and added: "We have no intention of letting this derail our timetable." Investors took the view that lawmakers would now be able to temper the government's policies, making it less likely that the government would opt for a "hard Brexit" — a scenario in which it prioritizes tight controls on immigration over remaining in the European single market. REUTERS

GOOGLE FORMALLY REJECTS EU ANTITRUST CHARGES

2 Google formally rejected European Union antitrust charges of unfairly promoting its shopping service and blocking rivals in online search advertising, paving the way for EU regulators to rule next year on these issues and potentially impose hefty fines. The U.S. technology giant's rebuttal in the shopping case came six years after the European Commission opened an investigation prompted by complaints from rivals such as Microsoft (MSFT.O) and a host of European and U.S. rivals. The EU regulator followed up with an anti-competitive charge against the company in April last year and added more evidence in July this year. It also issued a separate charge sheet against its online search advertising product AdSense for Search at the same time. Google's general counsel Kent Walker said on a blog that the accusations had no factual, legal or economic basis, and that the company's actions were driven by its users rather than any plan to squash rivals. REUTERS

JPMORGAN PLANTS DIGITAL PAYMENT FLAG AT WAL-MART

3 JPMorgan Chase is putting its "Chase Pay" digital wallet on Wal-Mart's website and in the retailer's Wal-mart Pay app, hoping to give customers more ways to make purchases without cash, a bank executive said. Kevin Watters, chief executive officer for cards at JPMorgan, said at a conference the bank is trying to make sure its Chase cards are an option for customers who want to make digital payments. Payments with smartphones and digital wallets, such as Apple Pay, probably won't account for even 1 percent of transactions "for a while," and will ultimately catch on in unpredictable ways, Watters said. "We want our card to be wherever our consumers want their card to be," Watters said. As Watters began to speak, the bank said it reached an agreement with Wal-Mart Stores Inc. allowing shoppers to be able to use Chase Pay. REUTERS

Members of the Transit Workers Union Local 234 picket outside the SEPTA Southern Depot in South Philadelphia on the second day of their citywide strike. CHARLES MOSTOLLER

Gloves come off as SEPTA, union leaders spar publicly over contracts

SEPTA hasn't bargained in good faith, union boss says.

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As the city's transit strike instigated another day of traffic gridlock, both sides of the contract dispute punched and counterpunched with no indication that an agreement will soon be reached.

SEPTA management issued a news release late Wednesday night blaming the union, stating that every time their negotiators thought progress was being made to end the strike, the union "has brought a halt to negotiations."

The union shot back that SEPTA is to blame for the walkout.

"Pat Deon must have dusted off a news release from some other contract negotiation if he claims SEPTA 'has bargained in good faith with the union, presented fair offers, and quickly and thoughtfully responded to all proposals,'" TWU Local 234 president Willie Brown complained in a news release issued just before noon Thursday.

"Really. Who is he kidding? Where has he been? SEPTA's bargaining team and high-priced outside lawyers stonewalled contract talks for months prior to the strike," he continued. "When the strike was called, they didn't utter a word for the first 16 hours."

Brown said if the union had accepted SEPTA's terms prior to the strike deadline its members "would have taken home less in their paychecks next year than they earn today."

Deon countered that "reasonable wage increases" are on the bargaining table. "Under our proposal, the average TWU employee's annual earnings would increase from $68,100 to $76,200 over the five years of our proposal," he said.

Deon asked the union to suspend its strike on Nov. 8 as the nation heads to the polls. Philadelphia is expected to vote overwhelmingly for Democrats Hillary Clinton and Senate candidate Katie McGinty. But many have expressed concerns that an ongoing SEPTA strike could hurt voter turnout.

"SEPTA requests that TWU leadership assure the citizens of the Philadelphia region that, if necessary, they will suspend their strike for Election Day," he said. "The TWU leadership ... should assure the public that if an agreement has not been reached, it will suspend the strike on Election Day to help ensure our citizens may exercise their right to vote. If TWU does not provide that assurance, SEPTA will seek to enjoin this strike."

A PlanPhilly reporter wrote that they were in the room with union reps and Rep. Bob Brady, who were discussing contract issues that reportedly hinge on workers' pension plans, when the statement was issued.

"I don't know why he's doing that," was Brady's response to Deon's statement being released, PlanPhilly reported.

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WEEK 40 10/31-11/6/16

Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton talks with Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf during a campaign rally. GETTY IMAGES

Governor signs legislation to battle opioid epidemic

Drug overdose leads firearms and car crashes as cause of death in the state.

ALEXIS SACHDEV
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Gov. Tom Wolf made major strides in the state's opioid epidemic Wednesday, signing a series of measures that restricts access to opioids and adds more checks for doctors and other prescribers.

The laws, five in total:

— Establish restrictions for prescribing opioids to minors.

— Creates opioid-prescribing curriculum in medical schools;.

— Requires prescribers to check a database each time they prescribe an opioid or benzodiazepine.

— Mandates that emergency rooms and urgent care centers write prescriptions in quantities for no longer than seven days.

— Allows all federal, state and local law enforcement entities and several health care agencies to serve as drop-off locations for unwanted or expired drugs.

"I am proud to sign a package of bills that represents the work that we have all done together to address the heroin and opioid abuse crisis, and begins to curb the effects of this public health epidemic in Pennsylvania," Wolf said in a statement.

"Four weeks ago, I addressed a joint session of the General Assembly to outline a set of legislative goals that would help us tackle this public health crisis and together, the General Assembly and my administration committed to help the victims of substance use disorder, and the communities that have been devastated by this terrible disease."

Deaths by drug overdose outpaced deaths by car crashes, firearms and homicide in 2014 in Pennsylvania, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Fueled by a boom in prescription pain medication, heroin and other drug addiction has swept across the state, from urban pockets to suburban and rural areas. Often, users become addicted through pain meds. When the prices become too overwhelming they will often turn to heroin or suboxone, a low-dose opioid used to treat addiction.

Last year, Wolf enacted a statewide standing order for all Pennsylvanians to be able to receive naloxone, a medication that can reverse an overdose.

Pic of the week

Send Metro your photos to be featured in next Friday's issue. Post your best local photos to Instagram or Twitter using the hashtag #metropicsphilly to not only see them in our paper, but also on Metro.us and our social media pages. METRO FILE

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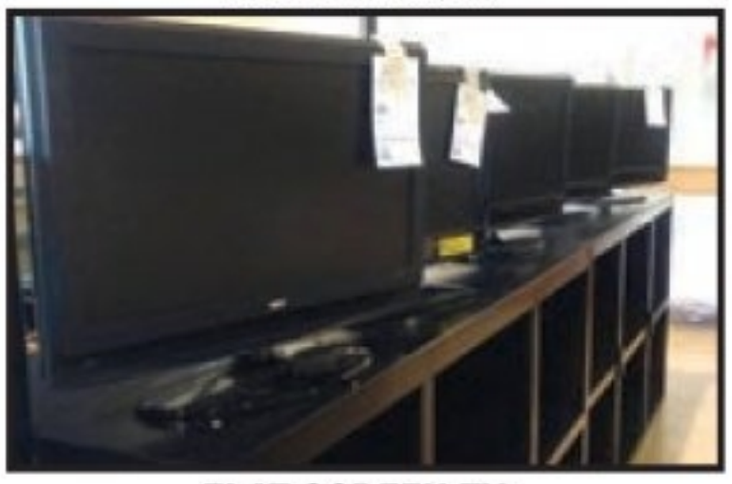

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Attorney Nadeem Bezar of Kline & Spector PC discusses a recent $5.3 million jury verdict for a girl who was placed into a foster home where she was sexually abused. SAM NEWHOUSE

Getting closure: Jury awards $5.3M to girl placed in abusive foster home

"Do I think it has an impact? Absolutely," attorney Nadeem Bezar said of the verdict.

SAM NEWHOUSE
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"I'm not a crusader."

Philadelphia lawyer Nadeem Bezar is reflecting on the trial last week where he represented a little girl who a foster care agency placed — twice — into the home of a sexual predator who violated her.

Part of Bezar's work consists of handling lawsuits related to child abuse. He is not someone who thinks the system needs to be totally overhauled, he said. But he is clearly infuriated by the cases in which adults who are supposed to protect children do the opposite, whether through malicious intent or negligence.

"You can't take kids out of what you think is a bad environment and put them in a worse one, and you certainly can't put them in a nightmare," Bezar said. "This is the most vulnerable part of our population. These are kids that have already had their lives disrupted."

Last week, a jury decided that the social services organization theVillage, formerly known as Presbyterian Children's Village, should pay $5.3 million for placing Bezar's client, who was 7, into the home of now-convicted sexual predator Walter Ola Scott. Money from the verdict would go into a trust for the child.

Requests for comment on the verdict were not answered by theVillage.

Scott is now in prison, convicted of endangering the welfare of a child and indecent assault of a child for the abuse of three children who came into his home as foster kids. One of the victims was Bezar's client.

"The levels of abuse vary with each one from unspeakable to horrible," Bezar said of the three victims.

Bezar's client was placed in Scott's home for just three days the first time.

Afterward, she reported that she had been sexually abused to her long-term foster parent, who shared the information with a psychiatrist. Yet four months later, she was placed there again, this time for five days.

"The Scott home should never have been selected as a resource [foster] home," Bezar said. "The child had disclosed enough information that an investigation as to what else is going on should have been done, and that would have prevented other kids from going into that home."

But she was put back into the custody of a monster, he said. And more unspeakable things happened.

According to Bezar, another foster care agency had marked the Scott home "do not use." The home was even being investigated by Child Protective Services when his client was placed there the second time. And interviewing Scott's own children might have led representatives of theVillage to conclude they could not place children there, he said.

"Why would you not ask his kids what it's like?" Bezar asked. "If they had scratched beyond the surface, they would have found it."

As for his client, he can only hope for the best.

"The imprint that these kinds of events leave can be lifelong," Bezar said. "We hope that everything works out for the best, and that she does as well as can be expected, but we don't know with kids who have been harmed like this."

His client, now 11, has since been adopted by relatives of her birth parents.

For the expanded version, visit metro.us

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Philly's pedaling population pushes demand for custom-built bicycles

Custom-made bikes will be on display at the Philadelphia Bike Expo this weekend.

MADELINE PRESLAND
@MetroPhilly
madeline.presland@metro.us

Philly is touted as a bicycle-friendly city and the growing population of cyclists is creating an increasing demand for bikes, especially custom-made bikes.

One place to view custom bikes or do research on builders is at the Philadelphia Bike Expo this weekend. Frame builder Stephen Bilenky organized the first convention in 2010 after attending similar events in California and Texas.

"I said, 'Let's put on a show!' and we did," he said. "Philly's a great bike town. And we're not just about hand-built bikes."

The expo attracts almost a hundred bike builders and companies and thousands of visitors. Bilenky hopes that this will be the biggest and most attended expo to date.

"There's a contingent of bicycle aficionados," said Bilenky. "They're like model railroaders. They collect."

Bilenky builds custom bike frames at his store in North Philadelphia. He said that the interest in custom bikes has increased over the years. His own company, Bilenky Bicycle Works, has enjoyed a steady business, even though the number of frame builders in Philadelphia has quadrupled in the past decade.

The Philadelphia Bike Expo has boomed since its first year. The Expo was originally held at the Armory on South 23rd Street, but it outgrew the venue and moved in 2014 to the Pennsylvania Convention Center.

Steve McGuire calls the expo a "must for the frame-building world." He is scheduled on Saturday to conduct a seminar called "Design, Build, Ride," which covers such topics as how to weld and build frames.

McGuire, who teaches bike-frame building courses at Iowa University, can build a bike in a day if he needs to. However, the process is usually much more time-consuming.

"A brazed frame will take 40 to upwards of 80 hours if it's really involved," he said.

"The bicycle is such a personal object," he added. "The difference between custom bikes and a bike that's made on the shop floor is that it's made exactly for you and your riding style. I tell people that they haven't ridden a bike until they ride one that's made especially for them."

Other panels at the expo cover such subjects as cycling attire for women, endurance cycling and the street smarts of cycling. Bilenky said that 40 percent of vendors and presenters at this weekend's event are new to the Philly Bike Expo.

The Philadelphia Bike Expo is held Saturday and Sunday at the Pennsylvania Convention Center (1101 Arch St.).

BIKE EXPO

BRIEFS

Get your free ticket to see Katy Perry perform for Hillary Clinton Saturday

Adding to Hillary Clinton's long list of star-studded events, pop artist Katy Perry will perform for free at the Mann Center on Saturday at a campaign event for the Democratic candidate.

Just days before Election Day, the "Firework" singer will perform as a last-minute push to urge Pennsylvanians to vote for Clinton.

Perry has been active in Clinton's campaign since an event last year in Iowa, and performed her hit songs "Roar" and "Rise" on the final night of the Democratic National Convention before Clinton took the stage back in July in Philadelphia.

The event is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Tickets are free, but registration is required at Hillaryclinton.com.

ALEXIS SACHDEV

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Voters worry about getting to polls during SEPTA strike

"I need [SEPTA] to get it together so I'm able to go vote."

ALEXIS SACHDEV
@lexsachdev
alexis.sachdev@metro.us

Rochelle Womack had a long day.

Standing outside the Clothespin around 4 p.m. Thursday, Womack had just ended her shift as a security officer in Center City and was waiting for a company-provided shuttle for her long trek back to Delaware County. She woke up at 4 a.m., and didn't expect to get home until after 7 p.m.

"It's a really long day. So that's what's really hard about SEPTA being on strike," she said.

Womack is just one of thousands whose life has been flung into chaos since Tuesday, when SEPTA's unionized workers walked off the job.

More than the struggle of her daily commute, though, the Yeadon woman fears how her travel ordeal will affect her on Election Day.

"Once I get home, I'm gonna have to drop my stuff off, go right to the polls and vote. I probably shouldn't even go home, 'cause that's gonna make it harder for me."

Crystal Smallwood, of Center City, has encountered a different problem. She's currently residing at 13th and Pine streets, but is registered to vote in West Philly.

"I need [SEPTA] to get it together so I'm able to go vote," said Smallwood, who has been mostly walking since the strike began. "Most I can do is call friends and see if someone can take me to go vote."

There are 1,686 polling locations, mostly within walking distance to voters' homes. It's not entirely clear how many voters are will be affected by the SEPTA strike on Election Day, but reports say that is thought to be a small number.

District Attorney Seth Williams said in a press conference Wednesday that generally people who will be affected by the strike on Election Day are those who get a ride to work. Williams encouraged anyone in that situation to cast their ballots before going to work.

Polling places in the state are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. A seemingly unconcerned Williams said anyone in line by 8 p.m. will be allowed to vote.

A lock and chain bars strikers from entering the Comly Street SEPTA depot.
GETTY IMAGES

Still, the Democratic Party has been paying attention.

Congressman Bob Brady, a Philadelphia Democrat, has been mediating talks between the Transit Workers Union Local 234 and SEPTA. He said members of Hillary Clinton's camp are worried.

"Corey Dukes had a little concern," Brady told the Philadelphia Inquirer, speaking about the director of Clinton's Pennsylvania campaign.

On the strike overlapping Election Day, Brady added, "it'll hurt."

In a separate interview with 6ABC, Brady said his concern is with timing.

"Everybody talks about the polling places, most of them are in walking distance, but if you go to work at 8 o'clock, you stop at 7 to vote. Now you're going to work at 7 o'clock, you might not have time to vote. And who knows, coming home you might be late coming home.

"I'm worried about that."

Acknowledging how important this year's election is, Womack also expressed concern.

"We don't want Donald Trump to win," she laughed, waiting outside the Centre Square building with a friend.

Even if the SEPTA strike spurred low voter turnout, it's unlikely Clinton would get burned. Registered Democrats outnumber Republicans in the city seven to one. In the state's April primary election, Clinton won 218,959 votes in Philly. Trump earned just more than 25,000, according to data from the Office of the Philadelphia City Commissioners.

But Ed Rendell, former Democratic National Committee chairman, says otherwise. In a radio show Wednesday, the party bigwig said effects of the strike on Nov. 8 could be a "real plus for Donald Trump."

For the expanded version, visit metro.us

FALL LEAF | Get Involved in Philly's Leaf Recycling Program
November 7th thru December 17th

There will be 23 collection areas throughout the City for weekly leaf drop-off on Saturdays starting November 19th (excluding the Saturday following Thanksgiving) from 9 AM to 3 PM at the locations below:

- 66th & Haverford Ave.
- 54th & Woodbine Ave.
- 43rd & Powelton Ave.
- 72nd & Buist Ave.
- Broad & Christian St.
- 20th & Hartranft St.
- 15th & Bigler St.
- Corinthian & Poplar St.
- American & Thompson St.
- Graver Lane & Seminole
- Cathedral & Ridge Ave.
- Washington Ln. & Ardleigh
- Upsal & Lowber St.
- Fisher & Ogontz Ave.
- Wayne Ave. & Logan St.
- 5th & Chelten Ave. (water reservoir)
- Castor & Foulkrod St.
- 7231 Torresdale Ave. – Russo Park
- 2901 Princeton Ave. (Mayfair Rec.)
- 7901 Ridgeway St. (Fox Chase Rec.)
- 8101 Bustleton Ave.
- 2900 Comly Rd. – Palmer Playground
- 1400 Cottman – Pennway & Cottman Ave. (Jardel Rec.)

Mechanical leaf collection will be offered starting November 7th in areas with a heavy concentration of leaves.
For drop-off details and schedules visit PhiladelphiaStreets.com/leaves or call 311.

COLLECTION GUIDELINES

Bagged leaf drop-off collection tips:
- Leaves must be placed in large brown biodegradable paper bags.
- Never mix trash or other recyclables with bagged leaves.

Mechanical collection area tips:
- Have leaves ready for collection by 7:00 AM Monday for each week of mechanical collection.
- If possible, move your vehicle to an off-street location on your scheduled collection day.
- Visit **PhiladelphiaStreets.com/leaves** for a full mechanical collection schedule by area.

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—Christine Walevska, "goddess of the cello", watched Shen Yun 5 times

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—Joe Heard, former White House photographer, watched Shen Yun 6 times

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**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
ON PROPOSED RATE CHANGE IN
STORMWATER RATES FOR COMMUNITY GARDENS
PHILADELPHIA WATER DEPARTMENT**

Notice is hereby given that the Philadelphia Water, Sewer and Stormwater Rate Board (Rate Board) will hold a public hearing on the Philadelphia Water Department's proposed change in stormwater rates for community gardens.

On June 28, 2016, Mayor James F. Kenney signed an ordinance passed by Philadelphia City Council that allows community gardens a special discounted rate for stormwater services. The ordinance directs the Rate Board to establish a special discounted stormwater charge, in an amount up to and including 100%, for approved community gardens. As a result, the Board may exempt community gardens from paying a monthly stormwater charge, as long as the gardens meet the criteria in the ordinance.

If a full stormwater charge exemption is granted to community gardens, the revenue loss to the Water Department is small enough that all other existing rates and charges will not increase for the remainder of the current Rate Period.

PUBLIC INPUT MEETINGS

Monday, November 14th, 2016
10:30 am-12:30 pm
Community Room at Villas Del CARIBE
167 W. Allegheny Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19140

Friday, November 18th, 2016
10:30 am-12:30 pm
Fumo Library
2437 S. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19148

Wednesday, November 16th, 2016
10:30 am-12:30 pm
Conversation Hall
Room 201 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

**MEETINGS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND AND PARTICIPATE**

The hearings provide an opportunity for those who wish to make a statement or present evidence, specific to their individual service and circumstances, on the record.

If you are unable to attend, correspondence for the Rate Board may be addressed to:

Philadelphia Water, Sewer and Stormwater Rate Board
City of Philadelphia Law Department
Attn: Gemela McClendon
1515 Arch Street, 15th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

For more info, please visit the Water, Sewer and Storm Water Rate Board website:
http://www.phila.gov/water/rateboard/Pages

PHILADELPHIA WATER

Campaigns opt for jazzy election night in NYC

One party will be super, another will be a pooper.

AMANDA MIKELBERG
@MetroNewYork
amanda.mikelberg@metro.us

The presidential candidates' Election Day celebrations might reflect their confidence in the outcome of the contest. Both will be in New York City, but each has rather different festivities planned.

Hillary Clinton is gearing up for a humongous party in the biggest venue in New York City — the Jacob Javits Center. It has a glass ceiling, which some suggest is symbolic for Clinton's breaking the ultimate barrier to become the first woman American President.

The Clinton camp's other election forecast is for bright skies — lit by fireworks over the Hudson River.

Clinton's guests will include friends, family, invited lawmakers, selected members of the news media and a few lucky members of the public determined ahead of time. There will be no general admission for the public.

In contrast, the usually extravagant Republican nominee Donald Trump has reportedly planned a more reserved election night gathering at the Hilton New York ballroom. The space is decidedly less fancy than the Trump Tower atrium. It would have been ill advised to hold it there, because it's a privately owned space, and the city had already fined Trump $10,000 for holding campaign events there, New York magazine reported.

A source told the magazine that Trump's party will be "relatively small" because Trump is "superstitious." "The event is invitation-only for friends and supporters of the Trump-Pence campaign," according to a news release.

As for Trump's fireworks, he's fresh out — since on Wednesday he both entered and exited a rally in Florida with the explosives.

Barring a voting mishap, the first round of champagne glasses will likely be filled around 7 p.m. ET, when the first states, Indiana, Kentucky as well as a very big swing state — Florida, with 29 electoral votes — close their polling stations.

Just a half an hour later the country will hear from North Carolina, also a battleground state. And then at 8 p.m. Ohio, with a significant 18 Electoral College votes.

After 8 p.m., results will start flooding in from Pennsylvania, Texas, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Maryland. By 10 p.m. New York and the rest of the country should be done counting.

The difference in the tone of each candidate's election night shindigs might have something to do with how the Electoral College vote numbers are stacking up — and not the popular vote.

The candidates need 270 Electoral College votes to clinch the election. At the moment, Clinton's count with the historically Democratic states, and a few of the left leaning states, puts her very close to the goal at 253. By the same counts, Trump has 179 without the biggest battlegrounds — which means he will have to take nearly every swing state to win.

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THE CHOICE

TOM FOREMAN

Opinion

CNN's Tom Foreman is the author of the book "My Year of Running Dangerously." @tomforemancnn

After all the bitterness, cheap shots, real contempt and false empathy let me just say I'll understand. When you step up to that ballot next week, stare at your choices and finally pick a president, I'll understand if you feel a little sick. Or you need a drink. Or you want to buy a canoe and start paddling for a distant shore.

I'll even understand if you don't vote.

Because as much as we may consider voting not merely a right but a duty, that presupposes a choice about which a conscientious voter can feel at least vaguely good — or ethical — or not nauseous. And for months now the polls have said that is not this race. The majority of voters have never trusted either of the main contenders, nor have they shown any depth of confidence in them.

Of course hardcore partisans, frothing for victory, hate talk like this. They suggest anyone who doesn't vote or (gasp!) goes for a third-party candidate is close kin to a traitor. I understand their feelings too. Hillary Clinton's supporters have a fine argument she has the experience and judgment for the job. Donald Trump's fans have just as much right to their claim his decisiveness and business skills could bust up D.C.'s status quo.

But again, the numbers show most voters have little faith these talents outweigh the contenders' weaknesses. For most Americans this is a Hobson's choice: Do you pull the lever for one bad candidate or another? And can you walk away with a clean conscience either way?

I know, I know — if you've already decided which choice is better, it will be tempting to attack these struggling voters should your side lose. But don't. Both Clinton and Trump have had many months and endless hours in the media to convince a clear majority of their merits.

So if your candidate has failed and loses the race, blame him or her. No one else. Then shake hands with your neighbor, no matter how that neighbor voted, and say "I understand." This has been an ugly race for all of us.

BRIEF

Clinton supporters worry about close White House race

Hillary Clinton's supporters nervously eyed opinion polls showing the Democrat with a tenuous lead over Republican rival Donald Trump on Thursday as the White House candidates raced through vital battleground states in a late search for votes.

Clinton was leading Trump by six percentage points, a Reuters/Ipsos poll found Wednesday. That was the same advantage she held before FBI Director James Comey sent a letter to Congress last week saying the agency had found a new cache of emails potentially related to its probe of Clinton emails.

Other polls have shown a far closer race, fueling Democratic worries about the state of the race just five days before Tuesday's election. Clinton's national lead over Trump eroded to three percentage points among likely voters in a New York Times/CBS News poll on Thursday, down from nine points just two weeks ago.

An average of polls compiled by RealClearPolitics website also showed her lead at 1.7 percentage points on Thursday, well down from the solid advantage she had until late last month.

"I'm worried that Trump may win," said Nancy Dubs, 83, a retiree in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, who said she was voting for Clinton. "I think it's maybe time to have a female president."

For Clinton supporters, it has been a quick shift from confidence to anxiety.

REUTERS

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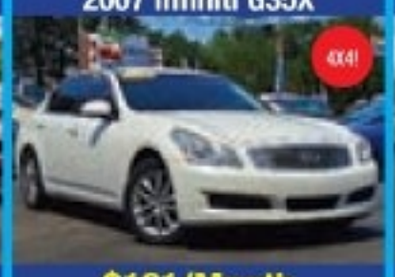

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US, 35 states to boost electric vehicle charging network

The White House has repeatedly tried to boost EV sales, including hiking the EV tax credit and converting it to a point-of-sale rebate, but the proposals have yet to pass Congress.

The White House said on Thursday it will establish 48 national electric-vehicle (EV) charging networks on nearly 25,000 miles of highways in 35 states.

The Obama administration said 28 states, utilities and vehicle manufactures, including General Motors Co., BMW AG. and Nissan Motor Co. and EV charging firms have also agreed to work together to jumpstart additional charging stations on the corridors.

The corridors were required to be established by December under a 2015 highway law.

The Federal Highway Administration on Thursday unveiled new roadside signs to help motorists find charging stations. The White House said drivers can expect either existing or planned charging stations within every 50 miles.

It also said 24 state and local governments have agreed to buy hundreds of additional electric vehicles for government fleets and add new EV charging stations. Overall, the number of U.S. charging stations has grown from 500 in 2008 to more than 16,000, the White House said.

California will buy at least 150 zero-emission vehicles and provide EV charging at a minimum of 5 percent of state-owned parking spaces by 2020.

The city of Atlanta will add 300 charging stations at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport by the end of 2017.

Los Angeles agreed to nearly triple the city's current plug-in electric fleet to 555 vehicles from about 200 by the end of 2017. Of those, 200 will be for the police department. The city is also adding another 500 charging stations by 2017.

EV owners will find charging stations about every 50 miles. GETTY IMAGES

One hurdle to the mass adoption of EVs has been the difficulty in finding places to recharge vehicles. In July, the White House said it was expanding a federal loan guarantee program to include companies building EV charging stations.

The Energy Department issued a notice clarifying that charging facilities, including hardware and software, are an eligible technology for the $4.5 billion loan program. But no loans have been made for EV charging projects yet, officials said on Thursday.

Administration efforts come as domestic EV sales have not met early expectations. Sales have fallen well below President Barack Obama's goal of 1 million by 2015.

U.S. Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz told Reuters in January that the country may hit the figure in three to four years with continuing improvements in battery technology, but he acknowledged low gasoline prices have hurt EV sales.

In August 2008, Obama set a goal of getting 1 million plug-in electric vehicles on the roads by 2015. Only about 520,000 electric cars have been sold in the United States since 2008, out of about 250 million cars and trucks on U.S. roads. REUTERS

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Islamic State leader says 'no retreat' from Mosul assault

Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi told his followers on Thursday there could be no retreat in a "total war" against the forces arrayed against them, as advancing soldiers battled into their northern Iraqi stronghold of Mosul.

Expressing confidence that his Islamic State fighters would prevail against Shi'ite Muslims, Western "crusaders" and Sunni "apostate" countries Turkey and Saudi Arabia, Baghdadi called on the jihadists fighting in Mosul to "wreak havoc."

"This raging battle and total war, and the great jihad that the state of Islam is fighting today only increases our firm belief, God willing, and our conviction that all this is a prelude to victory," Baghdadi said in an audio recording released online by supporters.

Iraqi regular troops and special forces,

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi GETTY IMAGES

Shi'ite militias, Kurdish peshmerga fighters and other groups backed by U.S.-led air strikes launched a campaign two weeks ago to retake Mosul.

Winning back the city would signal the defeat of the Iraqi half of a cross-border caliphate which Baghdadi declared from the pulpit of a Mosul mosque two years ago. Islamic State also holds large parts of neighboring Syria.

In his first audio message released in nearly a year, Baghdadi called on the population of Mosul's Nineveh province "not to weaken in the jihad" against the "enemies of God."

He also called on the group's suicide fighters to "turn the nights of the unbelievers into days, to wreak havoc in their land and make their blood flow as rivers."

Those tempted to flee should "know that the value of staying on your land with honor is a thousand times better than the price of retreating with shame."

Shortly after Baghdadi's speech was released at around 2 a.m., residents said heavy explosions shook eastern Mosul. One said the militants fired dozens of rockets towards the Intisar, Quds and Samah districts where soldiers have been closing in.

REUTERS

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Mads Mikkelsen plays "Doctor Strange's" resident villain: a sorcerer who wants to destroy the world so that he and his gang can live forever. MARVEL

wknd

A light chat about death with MADS MIKKELSEN

THE FUN STARTS HERE

In "Doctor Strange," the former "Hannibal" star plays a villain with, he feels, a method to his madness.

MATT PRIGGE
@mattprigge
matt.prigge@metro.us

Mads Mikkelsen can play nice, but he's also played both a Bond villain (in "Casino Royale") and Hannibal Lecter. In "Doctor Strange," the Danish performer predictably winds up on the evil side of the Marvel Cinematic Universe. He's Kaecilius, a devious sorcerer who winds up facing down Benedict Cumberbatch's neurosurgeon-turned-heroic-magician. Thing is, his plan almost sounds tantalizing: He wants to create a new society where humans live forever. The only problem: that involves killing most of the world.

Ignoring, of course, that it involves global genocide, Kaecilius' plan is attractive: He wants to find a way to cheat death.
[Laughs] It's very attractive. He has a point. Who would say no to what he's offering?

I'm not sure I wouldn't waste immortality if I had it.
That's always the thing: We define life within a certain time frame. For that reason, it gives it certain qualities. If we don't have that time frame anymore, we have to give it a different quality.

What do you think you'd do if you lived forever?
I would do more of the same, because it's incredibly fun to do what I'm doing. [Laughs]

It's too bad it must end.
Unless you believe in certain things. If you bring religion into the picture, that's also a way to become immortal, if you believe something else happens [after we die]. The human race has been circling that question forever. That must be one of the reasons we invented religion.

It all seems to stem from the fear that our bodies will one day fail us.
Even stronger than that is asking why on earth are we here? It simply doesn't make sense. It's not been done well. What was he thinking up there?

We have no clear explanation for why we're here.
Exactly. Some people embrace that and say, "There is no point, we can do whatever the f— we want." That's another way to approach it.

It's also a terrible way to approach it.
Some of them have a great deal of fun, though. [Laughs]

It must be nice to not be burdened by morality.
Exactly. But we are. But I guess that comes from religion as well. We'll never know until we're standing in front of that gate.

Unless nothing happens after we die.
Exactly. Then we can't turn around and tell people that.

GETTY IMAGES

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An origin story

Jurado's critically acclaimed "Vision of Us on the Land" dropped in March from Secretly Canadian. GETTY IMAGES

Damien Jurado conjures up "Visions of Us on the Land."

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It all began in a dream. This particular dream sparked Damien Jurado's 2012 record "Maraqopa," which tells the surreal adventures of a nameless protagonist. The Seattle-based singer/songwriter has now completed the third record in this trilogy with 2016's "Visions of Us on the Land," an introspective, psychedelia-tinged album that follows the character's journey across the U.S. with a partner called Silver Katherine.

It's an epic tale of travel, love and reflection, but its origin story is simpler than you might expect. "It didn't really take a lot of thought," explains Jurado. "It just sort of comes natural for me. I just followed the muse, I guess, and see what happens."

What ended up happening was one of Jurado's most diverse, expansive records yet. From electrified folk benders like "Exit 353" and spooky, rollicking cuts like "Mellow Blue Polka Dot" to the swirling, synth-laden "A.M. A.M.," it's a far cry from some of the now 43-year-old singer's earlier, minimally produced works.

Richard Swift (The Shins, Dan Auerbach's side project The Arcs) is responsible for some of his shifting tone. "This is my fourth record with Richard. I obviously like working with him," says Jurado. "I've been looking for someone most of my career to work with. Now that I found the dude … it'd be weird to think about doing a record without him."

While Jurado's poetic songwriting often begs for more explanation, he doesn't have the answers. "I'm not one that really writes a lot of stuff and analyzes it all," he notes. "I think a lot of people have different interpretations of what certain lines mean. I honestly don't know. I just sort of write it out. I don't think about it that often, you know?"

Further, he doesn't favor particular parts of the record. "For me, [my favorite part's] just making the record," says Jurado. "I really like making records. That, to me, is what I remember the most."

He prefers thinking about "Visions," and other albums, as a whole. "I could pick out my favorite songs and make a playlist, which is fine, but it kind of goes against the whole idea of the complete work. That's the problem, I think, with singles. I think singles shouldn't be taken off the record. I think singles, personally, should be made just for singles and nothing else."

For his upcoming live dates, Jurado is stripping down and just touring with his acoustic guitar. "It feels just how I wrote them."

PHILADELPHIA HOUSING AUTHORITY
MOVING TO WORK ANNUAL PLAN FISCAL YEAR 2018
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) is requesting public comments and conducting a public hearing on the proposed Moving to Work Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2018 (Annual Plan) which includes Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Program Significant Amendments for Westpark Plaza and Blumberg Senior Tower. PHA is a participant in the Moving to Work (MTW) Program pursuant to an MTW Agreement between PHA and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Annual Plan describes PHA's MTW proposed policy initiatives and activities for the period April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018.

The Annual Plan is available for public review on PHA's website at www.pha.phila.gov under the "Latest News" section or may be picked up at the following locations:

Housing Choice Voucher Program Office:
2850 Germantown Ave 1st Floor

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Abbottsford Homes – 3226 McMichael Street
Westpark Apartments – 4445 Holden Street
Spring Garden Apartments – 715 Brandywine Street
Wilson Park – 2500 Jackson Street
Fairhill Apartments – 2411 N.11th Street

Public Housing Management Offices:
Bartram Village - 5404 Gibson Drive
Raymond Rosen – 2110 N. 23rd Street

PHA residents, Housing Choice Voucher participants and the general public may provide oral comments on the Annual Plan by attending the public hearing described below and/or by submitting written comments during the comment period. A public hearing will be conducted at the following time and location:

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The public comment period begins on November 4, 2016 at 12 noon and ends on December 5, 2016 at 12 noon. Comments must be received by the end of the comment period. Please send written comments to:

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Claire Foy and Matt Smith

Netflix's new series shows Elizabeth II's ascent to the throne.

KATE MOONEY
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Today, Netflix's hotly anticipated series "The Crown" (from creator Peter Morgan, "The Queen") pulls back the curtain on the British royal family.

Season 1 opens in the year 1947, as a young Elizabeth II, (Claire Foy, who also played British royalty in the role of Anne Boleyn in BBC 2's "Wolf Hall") weds Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh (Matt Smith, the Eleventh Doctor on "Dr. Who").

But their honeymoon phase is cut short by the subsequent death of Elizabeth's father, King George VI (Jared Harris, "Mad Men") after which Elizabeth, at only 25 years old, ascends to the throne.

GETTY IMAGES

Matt Smith, left, and Claire Foy, right, star as Prince Philip and Queen Elizabeth II in Netflix's "The Crown," streaming today. ALEX BAILEY/NETFLIX

Foy's and Smith's performances as young newlyweds whose world is turned upside down serve to humanize the monarchs, who in real life are notoriously reserved.

It must be nerve-wracking playing these two iconic monarchs. Did you grow up watching them?

Claire Foy: When you live in England, they're very much in your lives. Harry and William, especially, is our generation. My mom really identified with Diana.

So, you do grow up with an awareness

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dazzle in 'The Crown'

of them, but not an awareness of them when they're younger, or knowing what their early married life was like, or all the struggles that we fictionally believe they had. You do sort of have to forget everything you know. It gives you the distance to not judge them, to see them as just human beings and try to put them in the context of your life.

Do you think that they'll watch it?
Foy: They'll definitely be aware of it. But, we'll never know [if they watch it], is the answer, because they'll never say.
Matt Smith: Too inscrutable.

You really humanized the characters — Elizabeth, at only 25, faced with that responsibility.
Foy: It's the script and the reality of their situation. You can't help but be moved by it and feel sympathy for the situation and the struggles they're going through.
Smith: You can't help but empathize. It sort of makes it almost, much less glamorous, even though it's a very glamorous world. You understand what they're going through, that they're just very human, trying to deal with this very, oddly, inhumane situation.

We read that it's going to be very PG-13 between your characters.
Foy: Oh, there's no rumpy-pumpy. No one wants to see that. [Cracks up]
Smith: No hanky-panky. It's just not a part of the story that you really need to see the queen and Philip, you know.
Foy: But it's definitely implied.

Prince Philip's role is very complex — in that era, for a man to be subservient to his wife.
Smith: Yes, absolutely, I think that was very difficult for him, with his great love and affection that he has towards Elizabeth, being emasculated after the death of King George — because from that point on, he had to walk two steps behind her the whole time. ... Being asked to kneel to his wife. These are things that, in the context of the 1950s, were unheard of with men.

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"Hacksaw Ridge"

Director: Mel Gibson
Stars: Andrew Garfield, Sam Worthington
Rating: R

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In Mel Gibson's "Hacksaw Ridge," Andrew Garfield, center, plays Desmond Doss, a pacifist who served during one of World War II's bloodiest battles while never picking up a rifle. MARK ROGERS

Mel Gibson's "Hacksaw Ridge" opens on a shot of bloody corpses. Over this heinous image we can hear eight whispered, earnest words: "Have you not heard? The Lord is God." That's "Hacksaw Ridge" in a nutshell, and that's Mel Gibson in a nutshell, too. The first movie he's directed in 10 years, released into a world that has far from forgiven him, is nothing if not direct with us. Its opening all but says, "This is what I am: a movie both religiously pious and so violent you might vomit in your mouth 20 times. Accept me." Accepting "Hacksaw Ridge," much less Gibson, isn't easy. But you have to respect it. After all, it's just being honest.

"Hacksaw Ridge," though, is not the story of Mel Gibson. It's the true story of Desmond Doss (Andrew Garfield), a man Gibson wishes he could be. A good ol' boy Seventh-Day Adventist, he made military history by serving in World War II without taking up a single arm. He was a pacifist, but also someone who wanted to help his country. When his unit was deployed to the bloody Battle of Okinawa, Doss made good by saving over 70 wounded men.

Fitting for a film made by someone long out of the game, "Hacksaw Ridge" is a throwback, which in this case means a type of film that was still popular only seven or eight years ago. Gibson has made a straight-up, simplistic husk of "old-fashioned" inspirational corn — a true story in which we root for a beleaguered hero against hissable monsters, then cheer as he prevails. Once Doss and company wind up overseas, Gibson segues into another kind of bygone movie: the World War II sagas of the late '90s. Specifically, he wants to one-up "Saving Private Ryan," taking that one's gruesome Normandy opener and stretching it into a full hour-plus of blown-off limbs, caved-in heads, screaming soldiers on fire, loving close-ups of rats gnawing on flesh.

This is every bit the pacifist story one would expect from someone whose Jesus movie would have gotten an NC-17 if it wasn't about Jesus. It's also a film only Mel Gibson, and no one else, could have made. A tale of persecution told by a deeply troubled but talented man, it bears all his obsessions and contradictions. It's alternately rousing and frustrating, moving and sickening. It can be all these things, because Gibson is all these things. "Hacksaw Ridge" is what it is, and if you don't leave liking its maker as a human being, at least you understand him. MATT PRIGGE

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"Moonlight"

Director: Barry Jenkins
Stars: Trevante Rhodes, Andre Holland
Rating: R

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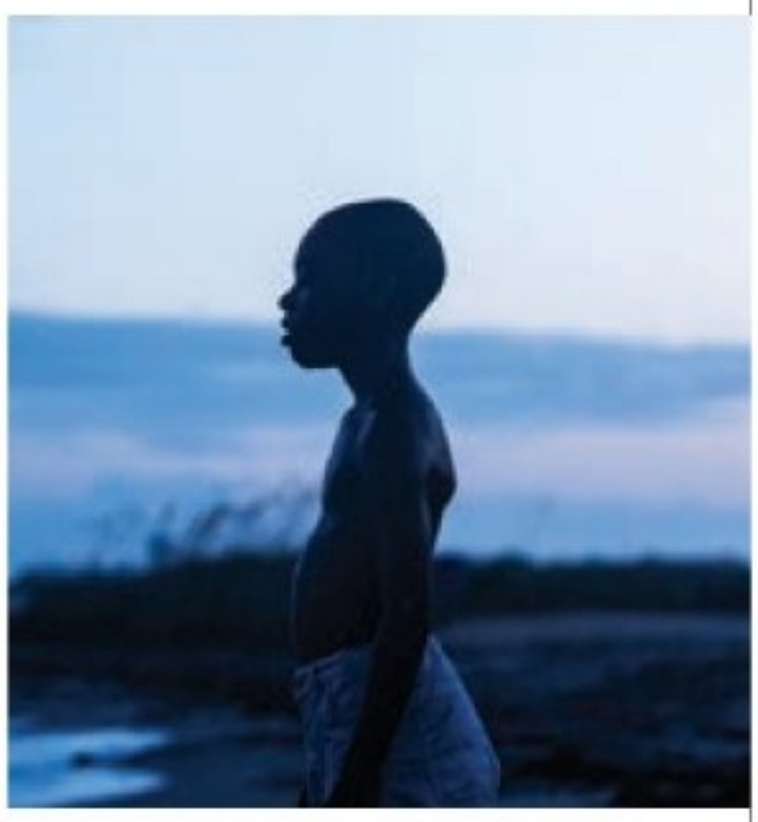
Yes, believe the hype: Barry Jenkins' "Moonlight" arrives in theaters as a film-festival juggernaut, hitting a marketplace ready for an empathetic, incisive look at the state of black America. Look close enough, though, and it's nowhere near a message movie. It's the human factor, the messiness and visual beauty that push it over.

Told over three time periods, with three different lead actors, it follows Chiron, raised in the rough Liberty City section of Miami, as he morphs from a shy kid (played by Alex Hibbert) into a bullied teen (Ashton Sanders) and, finally, into a hard, grill'd-up adult (Trevante Rhodes). Each narrative leap is a cosmic shock, each transformation a heartbreaker. By the time our hero's become a ripped drug dealer, he and the film seem destined for a devastating end.

But what happens next is magical. Jenkins' film takes an unpredictable turn in its final section, breaking free during one of the year's longest and most arresting scenes, which plays with our tendency to expect the worst.

Thing is, "Moonlight" was always hopeful. Its characters, from Chiron's crack-addicted mom (Naomie Harris) to a paternal dealer who takes him under his wing (Mahershala Ali), are rich and complex, never only one way. Jenkins plays with stereotypes and conventions only so he can upend them. The ugliest parts are beautiful, and the beautiful parts transcendent. By the end, calling "Moonlight" an "important" film seems like an insult. It's even better than that. MP



Alex Hibbert, as a poor black kid from a low-income part of Miami, stares out during one of the beautiful, transcendent moments in Barry Jenkins' "Moonlight." DAVID BORNFRIEND, A24

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Alex Hibbert, as a poor black kid from a low-income part of Miami, stares out during one of the beautiful, transcendent moments in Barry Jenkins' "Moonlight." DAVID BORNFRIEND, A24

"Moonlight"

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"The Handmaiden"

Director: Park Chan-wook
Stars: Kim Min-hee, Kim Tae-ri
Rating: R

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The tasteful and the trashy make acrobatic bedfellows in Park Chan-wook's "The Handmaiden," a movie so assured it can do a sex scene in which the camerawork is as arresting as the bodies engaged in combat. The director of "Oldboy" unexpectedly tackles "Fingersmith," one of author Sarah Waters' revisionist stabs at Victorian England, which mix lesbians into the usual morass of fineries, elegant chatter and miserablist grime. Park's relocated the novel to 1930s Korea, during the Japanese colonization. He's also made a movie that — despite some "Blue is the Warmest Color" action — isn't strictly for dudes.

We meet Sook-hee (Kim Tae-ri), a pickpocket who agrees to help a cad, a fraudulent "count" named Fujiwara (Ha Jung-woo), fleece his way into a marriage with the willowy heiress Hideko (Kim Min-hee). She'll pose as Hideko's handmaiden, while Fujiwara worms his way into her graces, takes her money then deposits her in a madhouse. Before that can happen, the two women fall in love. That, alas, is only the beginning: In the second half, we switch to Hideko's point-of-view and learn not all was what it seemed.

There will be blood, more funny than nasty, although very nasty indeed. That's a Park staple, as seen in secretly enlightened Korean fare like "Sympathy for Mr. Vengeance" and the darkly acerbic vampire anti-love story "Thirst." So is his attention to detail, his love for loud colors and his ability to wrangle the most out of killer set pieces. (The best one here: a seduction scene for the ages, involving nothing more than a pinky with a filer attached.)

Also as usual, Park is stealth in his smarts. The men are louses and crooks and sadists, and Park really seems to enjoy it as his women destroy their despicable overlords, eking out a brave new world, away from the things of man. It's a giddy thing, this movie, from stem to stern, right on down to its hilarious and loaded final shot. MP

Kim Min-hee and Kim Tae-ri get close in Park Chan-wook's lesbian romantic thriller "The Handmaiden." MAGNOLIA PICTURES

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B13 Ashraf Abuhanak Furniture - M9 James Mayer Household Items
Purchases must be made with cash only and paid at the above referenced facility in order to complete the transaction. Extra Space Storage may refuse any bid and may rescind any purchase up until the winning bidder takes possession of the personal property.

3 Things to watch for when the Eagles and Giants play in Week 9

The Eagles pass rush and wide receiving corps will be the most important factors in a Sunday victory.

EVAN MACY
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The Eagles and their pass rush can set the tone early and challenge Eli Manning Sunday. GETTY IMAGES

There are nearly a dozen storylines surrounding the Eagles' Week 9 match up in New York against the Giants on Sunday (at 1 p.m. on Fox).

It's not only a divisional battle, a game both teams desperately need to win, but also a game between two storied rivals.

It's a bounce-back game for the Eagles, who are coming off a devastating overtime setback in Dallas that exposed several key weaknesses and saw even more opportunities squandered.

It's the first game for the Eagles after releasing troubled wide receiver Josh Huff. And that's just scratching the surface.

When things kick off at MetLife Stadium, all eyes will be on this evenly matched contest between two 4-3 foes. Whoever is victorious will sit in solo second place in the NFC East.

Here are three things we'll be watching for in the game:

1 Slowing down a healthy OBJ

When Eli Manning and Odell Beckham Jr. are able to hook up consistently in a game, the Giants are lethal.

After nursing some minor injuries in recent weeks, Beckham says he is nearing 85-90 percent health heading into this week's game. That means the Eagles defense must make sure they pay close attention to him on every single play.

"He's tough," Eagles defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz said. "We've had some good receivers this year, really starting with [Browns WR Terrelle] Pryor … Whether it was him, [Bears WR] Alshon Jeffery, [Steelers WR] Antonio Brown, it seems like every week there is a guy like that. Beckham is similar to Brown in some ways. He's got extreme quickness. He can take a short pass and go the distance with it. He can threaten every inch of the field lengthwise and widthwise. And it's not just him down the field. We've got to do a great job of tackling him."

2 Pressuring Eli

When Giants quarterback Manning has time in the pocket, he can do a lot of damage. Lucky for the Eagles, they have one of the best pass rushes in football.

Also lucky for the Eagles, the New York offensive line isn't much better than the Vikings line the defense thoroughly dominated a few weeks ago.

"Eli is so good at getting that ball out quick and avoiding the bad plays, that it sort of makes up for their lack of run game," Schwartz said. "I think that that's probably — that's just as important. It doesn't matter how they gain yards, it's a matter of gaining yards and scoring points."

The Giants run game can be lacking, but the weapons on offense — Victor Cruz, Sterling Shepherd and others — makes up for it. Making Manning think quickly could keep the offense off the field.

3 Wasteful wideouts

Everyone knows the numbers. The Birds are in the bottom four in every statistical category related to receptions. The passing offense rarely goes down the field and Carson Wentz has shown to be reliant — in recent weeks — on short passes galore.

The Eagles lead the NFL in drops and without Josh Huff, pressure will be on Jordan Matthews, Nelson Agholor and Dorial Green-Beckham to actually produce in Week 9.

"We're not playing to the level that we need to be playing at," Matthews told Philly.com. "You can even throw me in there, too — me included with the whole group. It's on us to all say internally, how are we each going to go out there and not just do our job, but do our job to a level that now we're a threat to people? …

"It needs to be, 'OK, we need to be worried about these guys.' I know our defensive guys, [reporters] are going to ask them about the Giants wide receivers and what threat are they to [the defense]. We need to play to that level to where other teams are saying, 'We've got to get ready for these guys.' That's just on us."

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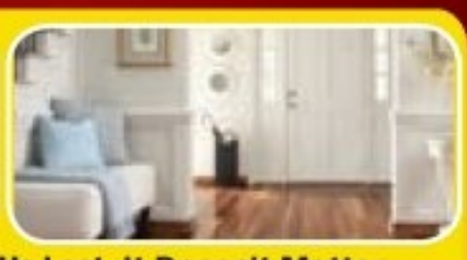

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The best bets for NFL Week 9

Where to place your money this weekend.

ROBERT CRISCOLA
@ItsGood2BeKing
sports@metro.us

A look at the best bets for NFL Week 9:

Philadelphia Eagles at New York Giants (-2.5)
The Eagles have dominated this rivalry of late (four straight wins) and it's hard to see a reversal of fortune for the Giants in this one, even off their bye week. Philly should be able to play keep-away against New York as it is third in the league in time of possession (32:24) and fifth in turnover ratio (plus-six). The Giants have struggled in both areas this season, ranking dead-last in time of possession (25:54) and 28th in turnover ratio (minus-seven).

The Eagles have been vulnerable against the run (114.7 YPG allowed) but the Giants haven't had over 50 yards on the ground in three straight tilts. Odell Beckham Jr. was shut down by Philly's defenders for the most part in 2015; he had a grand total of 115 yards in two contests against the Eagles last season. Look for Carson Wentz and company to right the ship this week after letting back-to-back fourth quarter leads slip away.
The pick: Eagles +2.5

Dallas Cowboys (-7) at Cleveland Browns
"Garbage time" points in successive weeks are the only reason the Browns appear to be playing respectable football at the moment. Upon further examination, they are clearly the worst team in the NFL and have a real chance to become the first winless squad since the 2008 Lions.

Cleveland allows a league-worst 421 YPG on defense, including an average of over 143 YPG rushing. Rookie of the Year candidate Ezekiel Elliott should dominate the Browns' run stoppers. The trends are not on Cleveland's side either; Dallas has won and covered in all three of their road tilts this year, while the Browns are 3-13 in their last 16 games as an underdog. Take the Cowboys with confidence as the best bet of the week.
The pick: Cowboys -7

New Orleans Saints (-3) at San Francisco 49ers
The Saints have covered in four straight contests and come into San Francisco ready to pile up the points. Recently promoted RB Tim Hightower torched the fearsome Seahawks' defense for 102 yards last week and could have a career day against the dreadful 49ers run stoppers (185 rushing YPG allowed, by far the worst in the league). San Francisco can't stop the pass either (26th in the NFL), so expect Drew Brees to have a productive day through the air as well.

New Orleans still has a bottom-five defense but the 49ers can't seem to stay on the field on offense; they're next-to-last in the league in time of possession at just over 26 minutes per game. The Niners' best offensive weapon, RB Carlos Hyde, is nursing a shoulder injury and may not be at 100 percent on Sunday, and Colin Kaepernick has been completely ineffective since taking over for Blaine Gabbert at QB in Week 6. Expect San Francisco's six-game losing streak (0-6 ATS as well) to continue.
The pick: Saints -3

Quick picks

— Pittsburgh Steelers @ Baltimore Ravens (-3)
— New York Jets @ Miami Dolphins (-3.5)
— Jacksonville Jaguars @ Kansas City Chiefs (-7.5)
— Detroit Lions @ Minnesota Vikings (-6)
— Carolina Panthers (-3) @ Los Angeles Rams
— Tennessee Titans @ San Diego Chargers (-4.5)
— Indianapolis Colts @ Green Bay Packers (-7)
— Denver Broncos @ Oakland Raiders (E)
— Buffalo Bills @ Seattle Seahawks (-7)

Expect Jordan Matthews and the Eagles to come up with a big road win this Sunday. GETTY IMAGES

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NFL CULTURE OF GUNS EMBODIES RISE OF DONALD TRUMP

EVAN MACY

OPINION

Evan Macy is the Philadelphia Sports Editor and a columnist at Metro US.

Follow him on Twitter @evan_macy

"I'm from Houston. You can't trust a lot of people in Houston. There's always somebody out to get to you."

This is a quote from Eagles wide receiver Josh Huff, addressing questions from reporters about his Tuesday arrest on marijuana and gun charges. He had a handgun that was registered in Texas but not in New Jersey. He also had six hollow-point bullets. He was headed to work.

"What professional athlete don't have a gun?" Huff continued. "I have a wife and I have a son at home, and my job is to protect them at all costs."

For anyone wondering how the Trump movement hit home with so many people — and how Donald Trump is less than a week from appearing on ballots in all 50 states as the Republican presidential nominee, the NFL could be a microcosm of the American mentality.

It's the most popular sport in the world. It's the most violent sport in the world. And its stars are paranoid, they have a stockpile of weapons for their protection and they are millionaires.

Make a word cloud of Trump's stump speeches, and many of the aforementioned words would appear fairly large. There is a culture of guns, of violence and of mistrust in America. And it's one Trump is exploiting and the NFL is amplifying.

Is there some kind of correlation between the NFL's culture and the movement that is supporting Trump? GETTY IMAGES

Huffs' Eagles teammate Fletcher Cox told CSNPhilly's Reuben Frank "I love my firearms" in the Philly locker room Wednesday. Another of Huff's teammates, linebacker Nigel Bradham was arrested twice, one time for a domestic dispute and another for a gun charge in Miami.

According to NFLArrest.com, the top crimes committed by NFL players are DUI, domestic violence, drugs, assault, disorderly conduct and gun charges.

The eyes of Americans are on NFL players — just as they are on the Republican standard bearer, Trump.

When Josh Huff said Wednesday, "I've felt my life has been threatened and that's why I do have a gun and I do have a license," it echoes the sentiment of countless Americans — many of them Trump voters.

Does Huff have a point?

In Philadelphia, gun violence is rampant. A "no snitching" culture makes it hard for cops to even close most cases. The city saw 280 homicides in 2015, with detectives only closing about 52 percent of those cases.

So far in 2016 there have been 237 homicides, a 1 percent uptick over this time last year, according to police department stats.

The disillusioned, uncomfortable and frustrated American landscape that is emerging is creating a culture of mistrust and of successful Americans, like Huff, who still feel they need firepower hidden in their passenger door console to keep them safe.

Huff's actions Tuesday cost him his job, as the Eagles cut ties with the third-year pro Thursday morning. Though it likely won't do much to fix the underlying problem, it was the right move for both the team and for Huff — who could face jail time for his alleged crimes.

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Even Flyers players have no idea why they start so slow, play so well from behind

The Flyers are among the worst first-period teams in hockey.

ERIC GOLDSTEIN
@EricEsponda
sports@metro.us

The Flyers might as well skip right to the second period with the way they've played in the first 20 minutes lately. GETTY IMAGES

Flyers defenseman Mark Streit cannot explain why the Flyers are prone to slow starts but play better when they are trailing in a game this season.

"I don't know," the veteran said after the team rallied from a 2-0 hole in the first period on Wednesday to beat the Red Wings, 4-3, in overtime. "I haven't figured that out yet."

He's not alone.

From the captain to the head coach, no one on the team has been able to offer up an explanation — or a solution, for that matter.

However, they know the perplexing pattern.

The Flyers are either careless with the puck, lack energy or suffer from some bad bounces and surrender a couple early goals. Then, usually in the second period, they find their legs, change the momentum and storm back into the game.

"I guess a light just turns on in our heads and we realize there's two points on the line," forward Brayden Schenn said. "However, we should start realizing that before the puck drops. I don't know why it's like that; it's all about urgency."

Through the first 11 games of the season heading into Thursday's matchup with the Islanders, the Flyers had allowed the first goal in all but three games and fallen behind by two goals or more in seven of them.

Remarkably, though, the Flyers have overcome those deficits to at least tie the game every single time — although it hasn't always resulted in a win. They erased a four-goal deficit against the Blackhawks before losing, 7-4, but rallied from a 3-0 hole to beat the Sabres in a shootout.

"It's nice to come back and win, but we have to stop doing this because it is getting old," captain Claude Giroux. "We have to find a way to have better starts."

The silver lining to their erratic play is the Flyers have proven they are never out of the game despite the score and shown they have character when faced with adversity.

"We're finding ways to battle back and that's important right now," Schenn said. "We're finding ways to get two points. It's nice to see the guys stick together with it."

The Flyers know the style of play is working, for now, but that is impossible to sustain over the course of a long season, especially against elite teams like the first-place Canadiens, who host the Flyers on Saturday.

"You cannot play hockey like that for every game," said Jake Voracek, who netted the game-winner in OT on Wednesday. "If you are going to play one of the top teams in the league … they are not going to let you back in the game. It takes so much energy out of you that you are eventually going to lose that game. We have to make sure that we end up back on top.

The champs are here

The Sixers — still winless — welcome the defending NBA champion Cavaliers to the Wells Fargo Center on Saturday night for a 7 p.m. matchup on CSN. A rare sellout (or near sellout) is expected to watch LeBron James, Kyrie Irving and the rest of the East's top team face Joel Embiid and the Sixers in person. GETTY IMAGES

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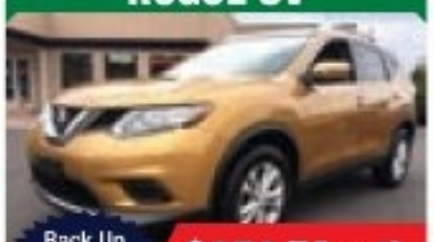

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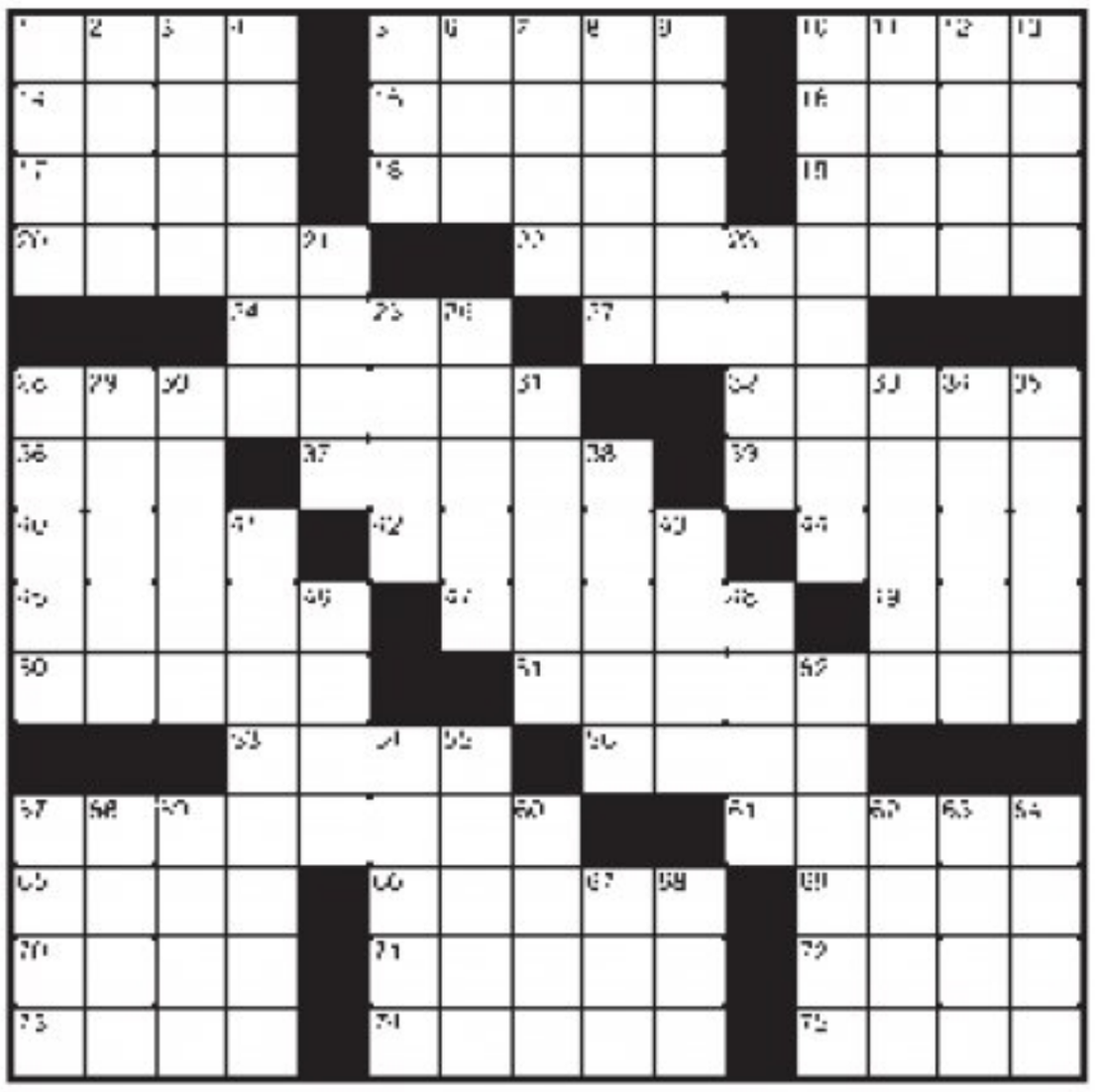

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6	2					5		
			5				1	
5			1	6				9

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Aries Don't let anything cause you stress or anxiety. Stay focused on what you do best, and spend time with someone supportive. Personal pampering will do you good.

Taurus Sharing information with a good friend will lead to an interesting venture. Personal changes should be made for the right reasons.

Gemini Don't lend or borrow money or possessions. An offer made to you will have unfavorable strings attached. Don't settle for less than you are worth.

Cancer If you express your interest in others' activities, you will gain insight into new possibilities. Exchange information and consider forming a partnership with someone.

Leo Broaden your horizons. Make changes to your lifestyle or profession. Offering a service or personal skill in a different capacity will lead to new possibilities.

Virgo Communication will be your forte. Don't back away from trouble when you can use your insight to find workable solutions. You can make a difference.

Libra Avoid arguments; it will be impossible to win them today. Take a time-out to work on your own problems instead of getting involved in someone else's business.

Scorpio Delve into something that excites you. If you offer creative suggestions, you'll persuade someone special to get involved in an important project.

Sagittarius An emotional matter will affect your ability to take care of your responsibilities. If you use your imagination, you will come up with a solution.

Capricorn Strong emotions will surface, but your gut feeling will be on target. Follow your instincts and do whatever you must to secure and brighten your prospects.

Aquarius Give your honest opinion or don't say anything at all. Your reputation will depend on how honest you are. Personal change should be your priority.

Pisces Investigate your options and negotiate to get what you want. Take care of your health. A rigorous routine and proper diet will get you into tip-top shape. EUGENIA LAST

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